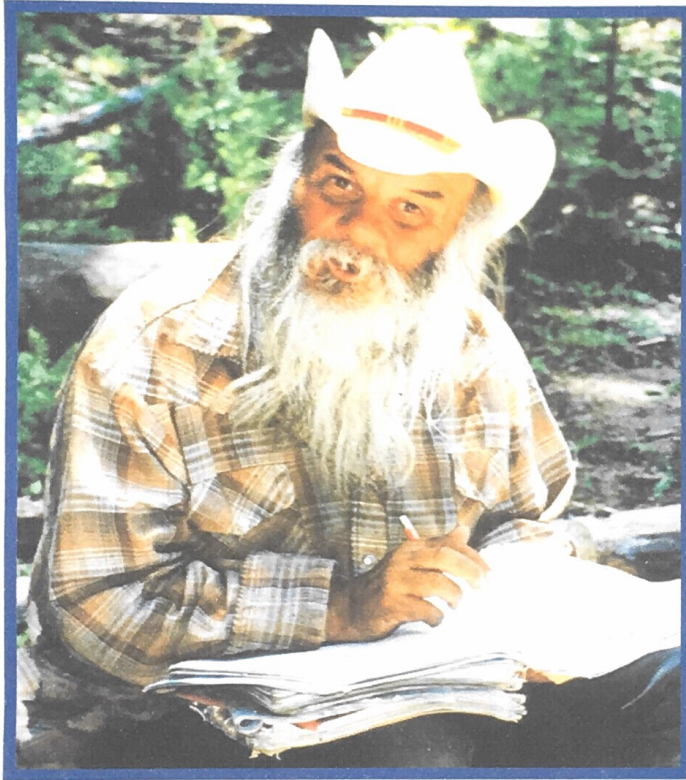


Rainbow Family

Life Stories



by Jodey Bateman.
Interviews with Rainbow
Family of Living Light
folks conducted between
1977 and 2008.
Scanned in 2018.
Jodey Bateman may be
contacted on Facebook.

04.I Chuck Windson - "Where the Family
Originated"

- interviewed at Oregon Gathering,

Chuck has been referred ¹⁹⁷⁸
to as "the Hidden Jewel of the Rainbow"
by Garrick Beck

12 pages

[04.I]

CHUCK WINDSONG. Where the Family Originated

[Barry says that when he first met Chuck in 1970, they talked for a while and found out they were both from Montana. Then they got talking about people they knew or were related to and figured out that they were second cousins.

Most of this life story comes from an interview with Chuck at the Oregon Gathering in 1978.]

I was born in 1939. [I'm 39. I've just become a grandfather. I was born in Stephenville, Montana in the Bitterroot Mountains between the Sawtooth Range and the Blue Diamond Range. My father and mother have been fruit tramps all their lives. They followed the crops all over the country. They kept me in the fields out under the trees they were picking when I was a baby. I was hauling apples and cherries around in boxes before I went to school. In fact I used to skip school—hide in the culvert and let the school bus honk its horn.

I was in one school and out of the other. I flunked the first and second grade from skipping school to work. My parents were divorced when I was in the second grade. Their parents were the ones who fucked it up, feuding with each other. My mother married three times after that.

When I was in third grade, my sister and I were kidnapped by some gypsies at gunpoint and held in a trailer park in Missoula for three weeks. The cops got us out. There was a great big thing about it in the papers.

From the third grade until the sixth, I lived in Butte, a mining town. I sold papers on the street and a lot of other things. My mother would make plaques and I'd sell them. There was a street of nothing but whores and I'd go sell papers to the whores. There was murders all the time. I seen people get shot playing cards when I was a kid.

I only went as far as the eighth grade. I dropped out when I was 16 going on 17. The thing for a young man like me was to fight for my country. I went in the Navy in 1956. I went to the Far East; the Phillipines and Korea and Vietnam. I started living with a woman in

1959 and we had a son. We got married in 1962 and had a daughter. My wife was a speed freak from San Francisco. She was the sister of the vice president of the Hell's Angels. She lived near where the black gang, the Rattlers, was. Every black guy had a white girl on the back of his bike. There was a continuous battle. Whenever I got off the Navy ship at Vallejo, the Angels would come pick me up on their scooters. At the time, they didn't even like sailors.

Some of them bikers had good jobs, were lawyers and all, very intelligent. Riding scooters was a hobby to them. But if you wanted to ride a Harley, you had to ride with a gang because of the hassles from other bikers. I wasn't a Hell's Angel. I never wore no colors. Then, I rode with the Angels and the Iron Horsemen. We never fucked with people on bikes - just Triumphs and BSA's.

I got out of the Navy in '65. I went to work for Boeing Aircraft in Seattle and joined the Iron Lords bike club. Boeing was worse than the military. They seem like instigators for war so they can make more planes. I got divorced that year. My wife was a biker and a heavy doper, and she came to me one day and said "How would you like to take care of the kids? You'd be a good father," and she never returned. I never heard from her again. She never made contact with her children or anything.

I got remarried in 1966. I had a boy by this new lady. I started taking LSD in 1967 and all that good LSD made me get rid of my second wife. She kept the boy I had by her. I quit Boeing in 1968. By then I had my own business weather stripping doors. Some old people wanted my kids by my first wife. They have raised my kids as foster parents since 1969. I gave my house away. I gave the business away. I gave my motorcycle away. I gave my car away. All my ex-wife got was the stereo.

Then when the Kent State killings happened in May, 1970, it freaked me out. I went up in the mountains with my oldest son for a while. He was 11 years old. One of the main reasons we went was he wanted to take acid because all the kids at school

were taking it. He said he didn't want to take it in the city. He wanted to take it in the mountains with me. He handled the acid better than I did. Kids can handle LSD better than grownups can. We ate a lot of acid together. We became brothers instead of father and son.

Then the visions started. Two days after I went up in the mountains, I met up with Barry Plunker Adams from Marble Mount Commune. He came up in the mountains and we stayed together for three months. That was when we first got the vision of the Rainbow Family through reading. Our first vision was Black Elk's vision of horses from all over the world together. There was a red horse ahead of all the horses, but the white horse was dragging behind. The Spirit came right in our camp and spoke to us and told us to go out and organize a gathering of all tribes. I don't know if I was on LSD or not. After a while you can't tell.

Black Elk was a really inspiring brother. Also Lao Tzu and the I Ching. We ate a lot of acid and had a lot of heavy visions. I seen a lot of rainbows around the sun. It happens any place where there's harmony. That's where the Family originated. I would go to Marble Mount Commune when I needed supplies and we had about 30 come camp with us in tents and lean-tos in the mountains. We had three big camps in the mountains - Love One Love Two and Love Three. We run draft dodgers across the Canadian border. We would come down ever so often to go to things like the Renaissance Fair in Eugene, Oregon - anything that was going on. We put on a carnival for the children's hospital in Seattle. We had a play of the Wizard of Oz for the children. I was the scarecrow. We almost got arrested when we come into town. Walt Disney had all the Disneyland characters in town at a department store. So we came parading in our costumes. One guy didn't have on nothing but a wolf's head for a G-string. They thought we was trying to kidnap the Disneyland characters.

Garrick Beck came to us at our camps with a spaghetti dinner and 100 hits of acid. We was climbing in the mountains and Barry's step kid, who was fine, took six hits of the acid and we didn't know it. Barry kicked him trying to get him to go up the mountain. We didn't know how

spaced the kid was. We left the kid behind for a moment and went over the ridge. We heard a scream and thought the kid had fell. We ran back and found the kid was eating flowers. He had just peaked. It took him about four days to come down from the acid.

We came down from the mountains in August, 1970, to put on the Vortex Rock Festival in McGiver State Park near Portland. That was actually the first Rainbow Gathering. We had gatherings in the mountains, but they wasn't nothing like that one. We had been working already on the World Family Gathering for 1972, since we first had our vision in the mountains.

In August, 1970, the American Legion was having a demonstration in Portland. The government wanted all the freaks to leave the city because they were afraid of a war happening. We didn't want the freaks in town for the American Legion either. We were into peace. We weren't into a heavy fucking war trip. So me and Barry and Garrick and a lot of other Family people asked for permission to hold a festival and they gave us McGiver Park. There was lots of bands. Santana was there. There was a lot of local bands—people bands that played for free things. Vortex was a free concert. So many people come there was no way of counting. The streets of Portland were bare of young people.

Vortex was where we really got our trip together really well. The Family got close together. We were already making up invitations for the '72 Gathering.

In 1971 I worked on a gathering called Sunrise '71 on the spring equinox outside of Lake Chelan, Washington on highway 20. It didn't work out. It was in a canyon. The cops wouldn't let no food or water into us. There was deputized rednecks who beat cars with billy clubs. We had to talk them out of a battle. We said "Leave us alone and you can have your lake" and we went to Lake Chelan and had a party there.

I was visiting my kids at Christmas, 1971, in Minnesota. My

daughter and I had just had dinner. Fasting makes visions clearer, but we had not been fasting. We were both picked off the earth and put into a gorgeous room with 100 other brothers and sisters. I had just a quick glance around the room and then I had to pay attention to the beautiful spirit talking to us. He told me to go to Florida. The next day my daughter and I walked around in the snow singing the song the spirit taught me. We never had heard the song before in our lives. It was about the returning of the children of the Rainbow. When we finished, we didn't remember what we had sang, but we were all lit up. My daughter was about seven or eight at the time.

I shaved my hair after that vision as an offering to the Spirit. What else can a naked man give? And I met up with other brothers and sisters who had the same vision and they had also cut their hair.

In January, 1972, I was in Florida when I had the main vision of what our gathering was really to be. I had not taken LSD or any other drug. The room I was in, my stepfather's apartment, filled with a large cloud. The room grew very hot. I was perspiring like I was swimming in a river. I was afraid until I felt love and peace from the squiggles of cloud. It became the solid figure of a human. Then the Spirit told me to relax and lay back down. I had been praying for our family for a long time - that's a steady prayer. The Spirit said that people everywhere were to gather in families and meet on the Fourth of July. One of every 100 people in a family is the Spirit. Of the other 99, the Spirit said 75 of them were to go out and tell others to gather in families, and the other 24 was to prepare in the mountains for the gathering for the returning of the Spirit. I could feel it was Christ he was talking about. Then the purpose of our gathering is to have the Christ consciousness ready in ourselves, because if he was to come like we are now, we might all be blinded. He would have to dim his light.

That spring we planted some Hopi corn on Garrick's farm in Oregon in the traditional way. I wasn't there, but a cloud

appeared in the cornfield, and then a rainbow and at the end of the rainbow was the stone tablet of many faces. The stone is 40,000 years old, comes from the pyramid of Lemuria called the Klaus. It's foretold that the pyramid will rise from the sea when the earth settles. We took the tablet to the Hopis. I didn't go with the group who took it. The Hopis said "Oh, thank you," but they said it wasn't their lost stone. The Hopis should have known it really is their stone

because the Hopis and the Lemurians were originally the same people. I know about this because I can see. Books started coming to me. I didn't have to look them up. I went to Mount Shasta and met with Sister Theora of the Sananda Sanata Kumara Foundation and she explained to me.

When we first got the stone, there was a slight hole in it. People said "There may be a treasure in it," and there was confusion and that's how the lower end got broke. Once I almost threw the stone in the ocean. The spirit in it was so strong, it was talking to me. It was like a test, having the stone and eating medicine. [peyote]

The stone has the face of God on it. There's an eagle on it, and a face in profile and a full face with a third eye looking straight at you. The brother in profile is kneeling to the third eye. There is a serpent and an elk and a woman on the tablet and a red horse beginning to appear, like our Indian heritage coming back. If you turn the stone to one side, you see a whole family of people. When some people put the stone against their forehead, they see visions. We've taken it to show to people and it's given them the gift of prophecy. They see about the changes in the earth that will come, and it explains about the two new colors that will be in the rainbow. Some people are starting to see them already. I've been the caretaker of the tablet and so has Phil Coyote, but it belongs to all of us. It's our rock. When the Lemurian pyramid rises out of the sea, we're supposed to

take the Tablet there and it will open a lot of doors for the Family.

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The biggest trouble at the Colorado Gathering was with the government road blocks and the sanitation department and the governor calling us names. Garrick and I and Barry and the other brothers and sisters went to talk to Governor Love. They couldn't believe we were there. It was going to happen. The state Highway Patrol and the Forestry Department and the parks department were working hand in hand with us. They were still helping us even after the road blocks. They let us pick up people in Granby, Colorado, who had already been put in jail for hitch hiking. Finally the governor had to open the road block.

There was about 10,000 people at the gathering. There was a lot of people who stayed behind for cleanup. Everybody seen a white buffalo made of cloud galloping across the sky. It looked like somebody had used one of them cookie cutter things and shaped it.

Barry and I seen Christ appear on Table Mountain at the gathering. At every gathering, people have seen him ascend. When you see cathedrals of rainbows at a gathering, like a geodesic dome of rainbows, then you know that only God could make it happen - the god consciousness in all of us. If you have God within you, Satan cannot appear as other than he is - a piece of shit.

After the gathering, I went to Minnesota to see my children. Then I went to the peyote fields, then back to Washington and back to here and back to there. Brother, you could never write down all the areas I went to and I could never remember them all.

Then we went to Wyoming for the 1973 Gathering. I met Patterson who started the Christ Brotherhood in Eugene, Oregon. Mitch of the Christ Brotherhood was there too. He put his finger on the map of the Arapaho Indian Reservation in Wyoming and picked a place there called "Paradise." Patterson and me went in an old Chevrolet flat bed truck to Wyoming. We met all the Indian chiefs in all the councils and they rejected us and we went up to a reservoir at Lander, Wyoming,

and started setting up camp and the towns people freaked out. They came up and asked me to come down and go to the sheriff's department. I was at the sheriff's department and the state Attorney General called and said "Anything the Rainbow Family wants, they can have it." Tools, big pots, everything they let us have it. They moved us down to the Little Pockongee River. They let us have the gathering there. It was a wonderful, beautiful gathering. A lot of people seen the Spirit ascend in the form

of an eagle. We had elk walk up to us and talk to us. North America is the New Jerusalem. It's also the heart of the beast. This is where the light is ascending in the middle of the beast to wipe it out, to change it. It's gonna happen because the beast can't stand love.

Then we had a Rainbow Gathering Thanksgiving Day 1973 at Teotihuacan, Mexico, at the Pyramid of the Sun. I hooked up with four Mexican brothers with an old beat-up tin bugle and some acid and some mushrooms and we hitched to the Mayan ruins at Palenque. I taken some mushrooms and met my first Lacandon Mayan Indian. He was a medicine man. He spoke broken English. I told him about the Family and he told me to go back to the Northwest and prepare for the return.

I came back to the Rainbow Farm in Oregon. Then I went to Spokane Washington, for the six months ecological fair that started in April, 1974, at Highbridge Park. I was there until June. Then we caravanned to Utah for the gathering. We were supposed to have it in Zion National Park on the Virgin River, but the park authorities wouldn't let us. Yet they let Hell's Angels and other bikers have their gathering in the park. We were led to a reservoir and then to a lake in the desert. The government said the lake was polluted, so they brought out water to us. Most of us were living in caves. There was lots of caves out there. Then White Dove and Dominic got into it at a peyote meeting. She pulled her pants down and told him to kiss her pussy. She said "This is my mother's vision." I left right then and the peyote was taken away. White Dove ain't that

bad. She's a good sister.

I went back and visited my kids and just traveled all over the United States and made preparations for the 1975 Gathering which brought us to Hee-Haw Arkansas. Barry and I hopped a freight and went to Arkansas. We were told we were going to have the gathering at Kyle's Landing. We decided to pick another spot. The National Forestry helped us pick the Buffalo River, which was our vision - where the White River ran into the Buffalo in the Ozark Mountains.

The sheriff of Yellville, Arkansas, told us that we wouldn't have it in his county. The afternoon of July 2, they arrested some people. I just missed getting arrested. The sheriff was mad at me because I told him to pick his cigaret off the ground where he threw it when he visited us. And he got very upset. But I was in town buying some supplies when the busts happened. Everybody was out of jail before we left. It turned out to be a really fine gathering.

After that, I went back to Mexico, to Palenque, and back. Then back to Montana and I started looking for a gathering site for 1976. We visited all the state representatives and all the government officials. First they said they would let us have it in Waterton Glacier International Peace Park for the world Bicentennial of America. They give us written permission. Then they changed their mind and sent us to Choteau, Montana. On the fourth of July we went to the Canadian border and had an OM circle with our Canadian brothers and sisters.

The government spent \$5,000 on SWAT teams hand picked from all over the US to watch us while we made the circle. They thought we were gonna make a revolution because I stamped all the invitations "All revolutionaries in solidarity. Garrick didn't like that. The Family got mad at me. But I had gone to the Hard Times Conference in January, 1976, in Chicago. I saw the people there who really needed the gathering - the Third World people - blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, workers. The people who were surviving genocide, surviving being sterilized and homogenized.

After Montana I went back to Mexico. My blood is of there. I hate Spanish ancestry on my mother's side. I ate a lot of peyote. That year that's about all we did. We had I don't know how many pounds of it. From there I went back to the North Country and worked on the 1977 New Mexico Gathering. The togetherness and the healing there was special. There was a good baseball game. And I got to help Grandfather David of

the Hopi Indians go to the bathroom and talked to him about the Family, and he said the only thing wrong with the Family was that we don't stick together when the gathering is over and the others scatter out and bring more people to the next gathering, like our original vision said.

I wanted to ask him a question about direction one morning - about if our family was affiliated with the Hopi vision. He was asleep, but he woke up and started singing "Frere Jacques" in Hopi, and I started singing with him. After the gathering, I went to the Indian Serpent Mound in Ohio and the Solar Gypsy Gathering in Quebec. So this year 100 people from Quebec are at the Oregon Gathering. I had a vision of Grandfather David in Quebec. Then I went to Alaska carrying the Stone of Many Faces. On the way I seen a vision of a white wolf and a rainbow made of snowflakes at night around the moon. When I hit Alaska, the wolf walked right in front of me. Another guy was with me. He seen it too, so I know I wasn't seeing things.

I was in Alaska for a moon. Then I went to Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and up to Belize and Mexico. I was there all winter. I got back May, 1978. Now I'm in Oregon at the gathering. It's perfect.

In my ordinary travels, I've been hitting all the communes in the United States, Canada and Alaska. I think we're shaping up, but we're slow at it. I'd like to see the whole vision happen.

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some day soon. Everybody's walking in order, and those who try to walk off that trail get pushed back on it. The Rainbow Family is the only life I live any more. The only place I have to go. JPI

[At the 1977 New Mexico Gathering, Sunny told me she dreamed she saw Chuck Windstrong's grave. At the time, she believed that Chuck wasn't going to live much longer and she said he was preparing himself for his death. I talked with Chuck at the Christ Brotherhood house in Santa Fe shortly after the gathering. He feared that the Carter administration's negotiations with Rainbow about government land for Peace Village might create a closed elite group at the top of Rainbow of people with better education than he had. This may have been responsible for his mood of coming to an end.

Then the negotiations stopped and instead of death, Chuck went through some big changes. In spring, 1979, he started living with a woman named Patty. In June, 1980, Chuck and Patty had a son named Charlie Fox, born in West Virginia at the beginning of the gathering. In 1982 they had a daughter named Riel, after the leader of an Indian uprising in Western Canada. Chuck and Patty are now living in Missoula, Montana, with their children.

In 1981 at the Washington Gathering Chuck said "I've been to all the gatherings and I haven't missed a one and I wouldn't miss a one." Then in 1983 Chuck and Barry visited their blood relatives instead of the Michigan Gathering. At the 1984 California Gathering Chuck told me his thoughts about the changes he has been through.]

In 1977, I was celibate for a year. I didn't smoke. I was fasting a lot, cleaning out the temple. I was down in Texas doing a lot of praying. I found that fasting is a prayer. I was asking the Lord to take me away and then in the desert, there was a light about 20 feet high. He was ready to take me away.

There wouldn't be no pain of death. But I wasn't ready.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord in my heart. He said "If you don't want something, don't ask for it." I was taking a step down into what I've been in for the last seven years. But I'm coming to the end of a cycle. Each cycle lasts about seven years. Seven years before I seen that light in Texas, I was a biker. Then I took my first acid.

1984 - I believe this will be the year of the radical. Reagan's going to win again and things will be happening. Radicals will be all over the place. A caravan is leaving the California Gathering for the Democratic Convention in San Francisco. Then they're going to the Republican Convention in Dallas. That will be heavy.

I don't want to be radical, because I have my family to think about, but I am interested in the political. It's always been hard for me to support my family. When I get jobs, I work real hard but after three months, my energy is too much for the guy in charge.

I'm into the Headwaters Alliance. That's a group that's concerned with political things. Like now they're bringing up what's happening in Central America.

At the gathering you may see a brother that's flipped out and freaked out, but in a little while he starts to change. Next year when you see him at the gathering, he's improved, and the next year he's improved even more. By the end of the gathering it's heavy. Everybody's of one mind, so after the gathering, if you think of somebody, you'll be in touch with them.

[Chuck and Patty have split up since he gave this additional account.]